

NEWS BOX

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Summer 2004

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I hope that this newsletter finds you enjoying the summer season filled with friends, family and vacation memories that will last a lifetime. I look at the photos from these events in my life and am so thankful for all the blessings I have received.

The Box Project has had an exciting spring and there have been many changes including moving the office to Florida. By the time that you receive this newsletter we will have our new office set up and doing all business from our new location. We are very excited about the new opportunities that this move affords us. The overall cost of doing business will be more reasonable and the volunteer pool is much greater. We will be geographically closer as well to our areas of service and look forward to building deeper relationships with our referral agencies.

As with any change there are mixed emotions, a sadness in parting with the past but also the excitement and enthusiasm to embrace the new. I want to thank our Connecticut staff,

Maureen and Sue; their years of commitment to The Box Project are appreciated and will be missed.

In packing up the office we looked at photos and newspaper clippings that have been given to us over the years from families and individuals that wanted to share their stories about The Box Project. Photos of meeting sister families, graduations and work projects all confirmed the importance of the work that we do.

For those of you that supported The Box Project in our recent spring appeal thank you so very much. Your support allows us to continue to grow and help build relationships that we can all be thankful for.

In gratitude,

Cindy Shearer, President

"Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future". JFK

WE HAVE MOVED!

Please make a note of our new contact information:

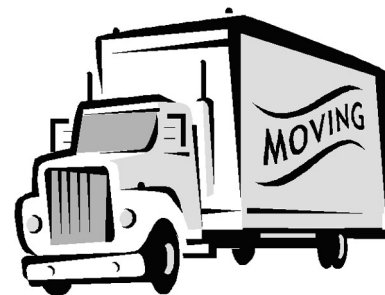
The Box Project
100 Business Center Drive
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Phone: 386-677-8094

Fax: 386-677-8617

Toll Free: 800-268-9928 (has not changed)

Email: info@boxproject.org



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STORIES FROM THE FIELD

Dear Friends,

I want to tell you about a wonderful relationship that I've enjoyed with our match family for the past 27 years. When I first wrote Annie Mae, I enclosed a check-off list so she could check off the items she needed so I'd know what to send. To my surprise, the list came back with every item checked. I couldn't imagine that there was a family anywhere who needed pots and pans, silverware, dishes, sheets, towels, and a multitude of other items; even shoes and socks and clothes for the children, of which there were four. I didn't allow myself to be overwhelmed, but little by little I began sending items. I don't know what kind of an effect they had on the family and I'm not sure I always sent the right sizes or colors but I know one thing. The boxes I sent were filled with love and I know that love was received on the other end.

Annie Mae is one of the most beautiful people in the world. I never had the privilege of meeting her face to face but I still felt loved by her. She never asked for anything she didn't need and she never asked that I write or send boxes more often than I did. She met an unfortunate death a few years ago that deeply saddened me. I still think of her often and wonder how her family is.

After Annie Mae's death, I communicated with her mother, Gertrude, another very beautiful person. Like Annie Mae, she never complained about anything, including my tardiness with boxes and letters, forgetting birthdays and celebrations now and then, and her failing health. In fact she'd always end her

letters with "And may God bless us all."

A few weeks ago a letter came from Gertrude's family. I had a feeling about what was inside when I saw the envelope. Usually in the upper left-hand corner was Gertrude's name but this time it said "Gertrude's family." And inside was a letter from her granddaughter that read:

Hi. How are you? Sorry it took so long to answer your letter, but we just runned up on it. Gertrude is doing better. She has gone to live with the Lord. My Granny die this morning about 8 o'clock.

I will like to thank you for everything you have done for her. I hope you have a great life. Thank you and you have a blessed day.

Jesus love you and we do to.

Thanks for everything.

Her family

That letter brought tears to my eyes and I thought about how important The Box Project has been to me over the years. It's brought much happiness and is certainly a beacon of light in a broken and hurting world.

If you're not yet a member of The Box Project, I pray you will become one today.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Holzhauer

WITH HELP FROM FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES—TSI WEB DESIGN

We are so fortunate to have friends in high places. This was particularly true and worked to our benefit recently when we needed to make some changes to our Website design. Responding to the feedback after our re-launch of our Website last fall, we wanted to make some additional changes to improve the professional look and navigation of our Website design, and more importantly, completely revamp the secure pages that handle credit card processing for memberships and donations.

Along came our friends at TelState International Corporation (TSI) a national Web development, database programming, and search engine optimization company located in Big Bear, California. Talking about high places, their offices are atop a 7000 ft. mountain. Connie Kelly, President of TSI, donated 100% of her staff's services to complete this project for us. With the expert work and patience of Paul Hagopian, the project team leader, we completed this project in time for our Spring Appeal letter soliciting donations.

We worked directly with Connie and her team on this project, and can't say enough good things about their creativity, patience, professionalism, and excellent quality work.

They were able to listen to our thoughts and ideas, make suggestions, and creatively help us design a site that we

believe will help us tell the story that will compel sponsors to join, donors to contribute, and the media to help us do an even better job of getting the word out.

Take a look at our latest version at www.boxproject.org. We encourage you to try out our donation pages, or even renew your membership online. New members can join, and even complete the family, holiday or community center match applications online. This should help us make matches even more quickly in the future (since we aren't waiting for the post office to send the applications to us).

If you, your company, or friends ever need the services of a Web design company, I can highly recommend TSI. Please let them know that you heard about them through us. They can be reached at:

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Email: connie.kelly@telstate.com

FROM THE DESK OF SUSAN PATNEAUDE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

I have been the Executive Director of The Box Project for less than a month now, and it has been an exciting beginning. Every person I meet is intrigued and excited about this organization. I am constantly reminded that The Box Project is still a secret after all these years and getting the word out about who we are and what we do is of paramount importance.

Our Marketing Committee, under the expert guidance of Sue Taylor, has begun to make great strides to put us front and center in the national media. The tremendous response of sponsors participating in our local press release project has helped us create more local exposure, and we are now seeing the increase in new sponsors. I, too, have been working on making some great friends for us and I know these friends will bring talent, resources and new energy to the great mission and purpose of The Box Project.

As you know, The Box Project just finished our move to Ormond Beach, Florida (Daytona Beach area) in early June. Some of the primary benefits of this move are that it allows us to be nearer to the majority of our constituents in the south, to decrease our costs, and to maximize our potential for volunteers to help us with work in our offices.

I'd like to give special thanks to Tom McDermott who I met in Florida in April. He is a fellow Rotarian and was immediately excited about The Box Project when I spoke to him. He was my mentor during the move here and he helped us find suitable, low-cost office space. He helped me to find some used office furniture and he even opened his lovely home to my son Matt,

my husband Roland and I for a week until our furniture arrived from Maine and we could move into our own house. He has also introduced me to representatives from Bethune Cookman College, Daytona Beach Community College, and others who I hope may be potential future partners for our organization.

Tom has invited me to join his Rotary and I have met some wonderful and caring people there. I was their speaker my first week here and the support and outpouring of friendship was sincere and gratifying. I have always considered myself a friend-raiser. I believe that if you can raise friends, you can raise anything. I have already made some wonderful friends and this journey has just begun! I am optimistic that the best possible things will come from this move and I look forward to helping The Box Project grow and get better and better at doing good.

I have a 25-year history of working as a non-profit administrator in the areas of domestic violence, sexual assault, homelessness, hunger, poverty, adolescent pregnancy and parenting, rural health and other issues affecting youth and the elderly in our society. I have much to give and more to learn and I can assure you I am up to this challenge.

I know that with friends like you the sky is the limit and with the help and support of the Board of Directors, volunteers and staff, The Box Project can become all it was meant to be and more. So let's dream the dreams together and one day we'll be proud to say we helped more people living in rural poverty in this country than anyone ever thought we could.

Susan Patneau, Executive Director

Save Money In The Kitchen by Tawra Kellam and Jill Cooper

For many people, cutting back on their grocery budgets can be an overwhelming experience.

Most people don't think they can live the frugal life and still be comfortable. I feed my family of four on \$125 month. Over five years, when my husband earned an average of \$22,000 per year, we paid off \$20,000 debt. When cutting your grocery bill and paying off debt, it's the little things that add up.

1. Drink water for your meals.
2. If your family is used to drinking milk, juice or pop for every meal then start by cutting juice from one meal or snack a day and drinking only water. After you get used to this, cut from another meal until you drink only water for meals and a glass of juice or milk at snack time.
3. You can also try allowing one glass of juice at meal times and then water after it is gone.
4. You save over \$500.00 a year by cutting just one glass of juice per person per day for a family of four.
5. Don't assume homemade is cheaper. If you get a very good deal on chocolate chips and ingredients for candies, it is cheaper to make them than buying them pre-made. Make sure you do the calculations, though! If you don't purchase them on sale, homemade candies can be more expensive than candies purchased at the store.
6. Stop wasting food. Give young children small portions. They can always have more if they are still hungry. Give

them a half glass of juice and a half sandwich so you don't waste uneaten food. Put food in the refrigerator right after the meal so it doesn't spoil. Use leftovers for lunches, in other dishes or frozen in one-portion sizes for a quick meal.

7. Don't buy everything at one store. Prices vary greatly from one store to the next. Go to different stores to buy only their sale items. You will save more than the cost of your gas. It usually only takes half an hour to 45 minutes per store to get the items that are on sale including driving time. If you save a minimum of \$20-\$30 per trip, it is like "earning" \$40-\$60 an hour. If I save \$60 spending one hour going to two different stores, it is five extra hours my husband does not have to work for us to pay for that same food purchased at the regular price.
8. Remember cooking frugally is a mindset. You have to change your cooking and eating habits. Don't get discouraged if one idea fails. Try another one.
9. Stop buying things like toaster pastries and breakfast bars for breakfast. Eat oatmeal, pancakes, granola and fruit instead.
10. Don't assume that bulk is cheaper. Compare cost by the ounce or pound.

If you would like free tips and recipes from Not Just Beans: 50 Years of Frugal Family Favorites, please visit our website at www.livingonadime.com.

THE BOX PROJECT EDUCATIONAL FUND SCHOLARSHIPS

The Box Project Educational Funds are available to approved recipient family members of The Box Project for secondary, college, and vocational education costs.

Scholarships are limited to \$300 per semester or \$600 per year. They are designed to supplement other funds by providing for necessities not covered in other programs.

We now require a completed standard application along with all additional documents as listed on page three of the application. An application form can be downloaded from the Web at www.boxproject.org/edfundsapp.pdf.

Once a completed application is received in the office, the staff verifies the eligibility of the applicant, and confirms that all required materials are attached.

The complete packet is then forwarded to the Scholarship Award committee for review and a final decision.

Once a decision has been reached, the applicant will be notified by mail if an award was approved or declined.

The processing time from the receipt of a completed application to notice of a final award decision is estimated to be 45 days.

COLLEGE FOR FREE? Savvy Search Secrets

Paul J. Krupin

Every year, millions of dollars of free money for college goes unclaimed because students aren't aware of it. The Internet is a storehouse of information on scholarships and grants for students of all ages -- but you have to know the best ways to find it.

Most scholarships are for either \$500 or \$1,000, though some offer as much as \$10,000 per year. Some students are awarded several different scholarships. Nearly every college or university offers full scholarships that cover tuition and living expenses.

WHAT TO DO

Start your search at www.google.com. This popular search engine constantly updates its listings on scholarships, grants, paid fellowships, etc.

Plug in "money words." Start with "scholarship." Then search related money words, such as "grant"... "fellowship"... "assistantship," etc. These will lead you to more revenue sources. To narrow your search...

Search with word strings. When you type more than one word in the search field, the listings will be more specific to your particular needs. Just enter the search words with a space between each word -- you don't need to include "and" or a plus sign.

Example: Scholarship graphic design San Francisco 2003. The location you include can be either where you live or where you want to go to school.

Change one word at a time after your initial search. In the example above, replace "scholarship" with "grant" or "graphic design" with "art."

Helpful: Make a list of key words and their synonyms to include in your scholarship search.

Bypass commercial sites. Typing ".com" in the search field streamlines your search by eliminating paid-for scholarship search services.

Search your interests. No matter what you like to do -- play tennis, skydive, act, quilt -- there are probably scholarships available. Pair your interests with the word "scholarship" in your search engine.

Search the sites of major foundations, associations and companies. Many offer scholarships. Some examples to search under...

Acting...

Donna Reed Performing Arts scholarships

Irene Ryan Acting Competition

Athletics...

National College Athletic Association (NCAA)

Business...

IBM scholarships

Rotary International scholarships

Conservation...

Soil and Water Conservation Society scholarships

World Wildlife Fund

Science and technology...

DuPont Challenge Science Essay Awards Program

Intel scholarships

Microsoft scholarships

Military science scholarships

National science scholarships.

Bottom Line/Personal interviewed Paul J. Krupin, government researcher with the US Department of Energy, Kennewick, Washington. He is author of the Magic Search Words series of books, including Magic Search Words: Scholarships (Direct Contact). He started the series to help people use Internet search engines effectively. www.magicsearchwords.com

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THE HIDDEN RULES & VALUES OF POVERTY

By Lisa E. Remmick, MA, Care Manager, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, Nationally Board Certified Counselor

I joined The Box Project in October of 2003 and was quickly matched with a single mother of 2 boys. I loved my family right from the start but quickly encountered situations and issues that were troublesome for me. The mother I was sponsoring quit school in the 9th grade, making communication by phone or letter very difficult—I had a hard time understanding either, and found myself saying “yes” on the phone to things I really didn’t understand. Another issue that concerned me was her request for things like DVD’s and other items I considered frivolous—after all I still didn’t even have a DVD player myself. I then remembered a book I had read when working with the homeless population for several years. The book entitled “Bridges out of Poverty, Strategies for Professionals and Communities” and in flipping through it, I realized that I was applying my middle class values/rules to my match family—but they meant nothing to her. Recent chats on the Chatterbox have reinforced that many sponsors struggle with similar issues handling their match family’s requests. With this article I am hoping to highlight some of the points that were important to me in understanding my family better. All of the information I’m listing comes from the above cited book.

First, in thinking about our families we must remember that poverty is relative. If everyone around you is living in similar situations, poverty seems normal and middle class or wealth may seem like vague ideals. There are at least two types of poverty: generational poverty which is defined as “being in poverty for two generations or longer”. This describes many of our match families, and this type of poverty is a much more difficult cycle to break. The other type is situational poverty which could happen to any of us with a job loss, illness, death of a partner, etc. People in situational poverty tend to stay there for a shorter period of time and have more resources to dig themselves out.

Each class—and I am only going to focus on middle-class and poverty classes for this article—comes with its own set of hidden rules. Even if families in poverty were to suddenly have more income, without instruction they would most likely still use the patterns of thoughts, values, social interaction and cognition as if they were still in poverty. In order to understand families in poverty, we have to understand the hidden rules by which they operate, and help teach them new rules to increase their success in meeting their goals whether at work, school or in their community.

Could You Survive in Poverty?

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Do you know which grocery stores’ garbage bins can be easily accessed for thrown away food?
2. Do you know how to get someone out of jail?
3. Do you know how to cash a check without a checking account?
4. Do you know how to survive without heat, water, or a phone?
5. Do you know what to do if you don’t have money to pay your bills?
6. Do you know how to move all your belongings in a half day?
7. Do you know how to use a knife as a scissors?
8. Do you know where free medical clinics are located?

9. Do you know how to get by without a car in a city with no public transportation?

All of these questions highlight a special knowledge or skill that people in poverty develop and/or use. I was puzzled by the question about the knife as a scissors but as the book indicates people in poverty rarely have access to tools. They make due with what they have. This also explains why those in poverty frequently don’t do home repairs or fix minor things around the house—I went straight out and bought my match family a hammer, a set of screwdrivers, pliers, etc.

Although we don’t want to make broad generalizations, the book discusses how values may often differ between the classes of poverty and middle class. Here is a brief overview:

1. Possessions—for people in poverty people and relationships are the key; for middle class it is possessions.
2. Money—for people in poverty it is to be spent; for middle class it is to be managed.
3. Food—in poverty having enough/quantity is important, middle class is focused on quality.
4. Clothing—in poverty it is valued for style and expression of personality; for middle class the focus is on quality and labels.
5. Time—for poverty the present is the most important, decisions are based on feelings and survival; for middle class the future is more important.
6. Education—for poverty it is valued but seen as an abstract or out of reach reality; for middle class it is crucial for making money and being successful.
7. Driving Force—for those in poverty it is survival, happiness at present, and entertainment; for middle class it is work and achievement.

To illustrate this point, I had been working with a homeless man who had been living in the woods. I found him a room to board and someone to donate a dorm sized fridge so he could have fresh food. I met with him the following week and he said he had taken the bus to see his mother over the weekend. Hmm, he had no money so I asked how. He informed me he had hocked the fridge, bought a bus ticket and a cheap stereo. This is a perfect illustration of focusing on the present, focusing on relationships, and focusing on entertainment versus other things like storing food for the future.

My hope is that this brief information will help you to think about the hidden rules you operate with, and if you are expecting the same values from your match family. In essence, I think it is up to us to try to understand our match families hidden rules/values that motivate their decisions and maybe, with slow reaching out we can share some of the values that have helped us—so that they can seek to not only improve their circumstances but also survive and thrive after breaking the cycle of poverty in their family. Often one of the biggest struggles in getting out of poverty is learning to manage money. The idea of using money for security is a value that is learned. Be gentle with your families, try not to push your values on to them, and listen, really listen, to where they are coming from.

***Bridges Out of Poverty, Strategies for Professionals and Communities. (Payne, R.; De Vol, P.; Dreussi Smith, T.; 2001)*

THE BOX PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT

The Box Project is working on producing an annual report for the 2003 year. Please watch for it on our Website in the coming months.

We want to ensure that the information is valuable to you. We welcome your ideas and suggestions for improvement in future years.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS/INSERTS

Many sponsors have contacted us to request that we provide educational materials that could be easily inserted into monthly boxes.

We welcome your suggestions or comments on this initiative, including submissions of materials to assist us in building a library of educational and informational resources.

Since much of our newsletter content is targeted to sponsors, recipient members only receive select editions of the newsletter. This issue was not sent to recipient families. However, we have designed the layout of this issue to group the articles that may be most interesting for our recipient families. We have placed them on the insert (pages 3 & 4) to make it easy to pull out and include in a future box—if you feel it may be of interest to your match family.

NEWSLETTER ARTICLE SUBMISSIONS

As the editor of News Box, I want to personally solicit your ideas and suggestions. Several articles in this newsletter were the result of member submissions. Please send stories or ideas to editor@boxproject.org, or send them to the office to be forwarded to me. If you would like to submit an article for consideration, or if you see an article online or in print that you think would be valuable to our members, please don't hesitate to let me know.

Best regards, Sue Taylor, Editor

AMERICAN EXPRESS MEMBERSHIP REWARDS DONATIONS

American Express Cardmembers, you can now contribute to The Box Project in two new ways: donating Membership Rewards points, or scheduling a one-time or recurring donation charged to your credit card.

Go to www.americanexpress.com/donate, search for "Box Project" then select either a monetary donation or donate your Membership Rewards points (The Box Project receives \$5 for every 1,000 points redeemed).

Note: American Express dictates that your donation may not be used for membership dues



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